of producing results of the most appalling magnitude. The winds of feeling, the waves of passion, and the fires of lust, the old and recognised elements, do not produce greater effects upon each other, and upon the more earthly ingredients in man's nature, than does the more latent principle that derives its force from the repelling and attractive power of conscience. No human arithmetic can estimate the velocity with which this current, positive or negative, will rush in to fill the vacuum which may have been produced in the heart of an individual man, when the worldly hopes which filled it have been torn away, or in the heart of a nation when it is without a creed, or when its creed has become obsolete, and is felt to be indefensible. The lurid lightning does not produce a more rapid effect in the physical world, nor does the accompanying thunder raise a deeper feeling of awe, than the religious impulse has done at some periods, and the hatred of religion has done at other periods in the history of the world.

It is thus that we are to account for the powerful impulse "which religion^ or the hatred of religion, has given to the minds of individual men and of nations. -Hence the frenzy—hence the bigotry of infidelity. Hence, too, the frenzy—hence the bigotry of superstition. Hence we find men now mad upon their idols, and now mad against them—now honouring, and forthwith beating them. The ancient Egyptians, in times of severe national distress, took their sacred animals to a secret place and put them to death; and threatened their gods, that, if the calamity did not pass away, they would disclose the mysteries of Isis, or expose the members of Osiris to Typhon. Augustus revenged himself for the loss of his fleet by storms on two several occasions, by forbidding the statue of Neptune to be carried in the procession of the gods. "These men fear the gods," says Plutarch, "and fly to them for succour. They flatter them, and insult them. They pray to them, and com • plain of them." These impulses have at times been stronger than the strongest of human instincts and affections, than the love of parents for their children, or the love of life. Mothers have made their children to pass through the fire; and devotees have mangled their own bodies, or thrown themselves before the car of Juggernaut. The results that have followed from the abuse of this sentiment have been as stupendous and melancholy as any that have proceeded from the bursting out of the human passions. One hundred and thirty-six thousand human skulls were counted in a particular temple in Mexico; and it is calculated, that for a period of 200 years, there had been an average of 680 murders in honour of a single idol.*

Other events show, that enmity to God has produced consequences no less lamentable. The history of the Jews, at the fall of Jerusalem, does not more strikingly illustrate the strength of the one principle, than the counterpart history of Paris, at the time of the first Revolution, demonstrates the force of the other principle, when men, as Burke says, "hate God with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their soul, and with all their strength." The whole

passage is worthy of being quoted, as descriptive of the strength of a principle, of the nature of which, however, Burke had nothing but imperfect glimpses. *' The rebels to God perfectly abhor the author of their being; they hate him with all their mind, with all their Houl, and with all their strength. He never presents himself to their thoughts, but to menace and alarm them. They cannot strike the sun out of the heavens, but they are able to raise a smouldering smoke that obscures him from their own eyes. Not being able to revenge themselves on God, they have a delight in, vicariously defacing, degrading, tortimng, and tearing to pieces his image in man. Let no one judge of %em by what lie has conceived of them, when they were not incorporated and had no lead. They were then only passengers iu a common

* Prescott'B Conquest of Mexico, B. i. c. ill

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